

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

Upon entry by the Examiner, this listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (currently amended) A shipping container tracking system, comprising:  
at least one shipping container sensor adapted to be attached to a first shipping container to sense a national security condition of said first shipping container; and

a ~~first shipping container~~ communication adapter associated with said first shipping container; and

at least a second communication adapter associated with a second shipping container, said first communication adapter being constructed and arranged to adaptively communicate said national security condition of said first shipping container with a second shipping container said second communication adapter, at least one of said communication adapters defining a master device and another of said communication adapters defining a slave device.

2. (original) The shipping container tracking system according to claim 1, further comprising:

at least one of a satellite communication adapter and a radio adapter.

3. (currently amended) The shipping container tracking system according to claim 1, wherein:

said ~~first shipping container~~ communication adapter connects said first shipping container to an Ad-Hoc network.

4. (original) The shipping container tracking system according to claim 3, wherein:

said Ad-Hoc network is at least one of a Bluetooth piconet network, an Ultra-Wide-Band wireless network and a Wi-Fi network.

5. (original) The shipping container tracking system according to claim 3,  
wherein:

said Ad-Hoc network is a hard-wired network.

6. (original) The shipping container tracking system according to claim 3,  
wherein:

said Ad-Hoc network is a wireless network.

7. (previously presented) The shipping container tracking system  
according to claim 2, wherein:

said radio adapter communicates with a cell phone communications  
network.

8. (original) The shipping container tracking system according to claim 1,  
further comprising:

a central database to receive said at least one shipping container sensor  
data.

9. (currently amended) A shipping container tracking system,  
comprising:

at least one shipping container sensor adapted to be attached to a  
first shipping container to sense a national security condition of said first shipping  
container;

a first communication adapter associated with said first shipping  
container constructed and arranged to adaptively communicate said national security  
condition of said first shipping container with a second communication adapter  
associated with a second shipping container; and

a central database to receive said at least one shipping container sensor  
data,

~~The shipping container tracking system according to claim 8, wherein:~~

said central database verifies a content of said first shipping container by processing said national security condition of said first shipping container against a shipping manifest database.

10. (previously presented) A shipping container tracking system, comprising:

at least one shipping container sensor adapted to be attached to a first shipping container to sense at least one of a condition of said first shipping container and a condition of at least one item within said first shipping container;

a shipping container communication adapter to adaptively communicate with a second shipping container; and

a line of intermediary communications buoys placed at sea at appropriate locations to at least one of test said container tracking system functionality and to detect anomalies at a safe distance from port facilities.

11. (previously presented) A method of distributing data obtained from sensors adaptively attached to a shipping container, comprising:

establishing a network connection between a first shipping container, a second shipping container and a ship's bridge;

transmitting national security sensor data from said first shipping container to said second shipping container if said sensor attached to said first shipping container detects a hazard and said first shipping container is unable to transmit its national security sensor data to said ship's bridge; and

transmitting said national security sensor data to said ship's bridge if at least one of said first shipping container and said second shipping container detects said hazard.

12. (previously presented) The method of distributing data obtained from sensors adaptively attached to a shipping container according to claim 11, further comprising:

detecting changes in a path of radio signals between said first shipping container and said second shipping container to detect additions and removal of at least one shipping container from a ship.

13. (previously presented) The method of distributing data obtained from sensors adaptively attached to a shipping container according to claim 11, further comprising:

transmitting said national security sensor data from said second shipping container to at least one of a satellite data path, a radio data path, and said shipboard system.

14. (original) The method of distributing data obtained from sensors adaptively attached to a shipping container according to claim 11, wherein:

said step of establishing a network connection establishes an Ad-Hoc network.

15. (original) The method of distributing data obtained from sensors adaptively attached to a shipping container according to claim 11, wherein:

said step of establishing a network connection establishes a hard-wired Ad-Hoc network.

16. (original) The method of distributing data obtained from sensors adaptively attached to a shipping container according to claim 11, wherein:

said step of establishing a network connection establishes a wireless Ad-Hoc network.

17. (original) The method of distributing data obtained from sensors adaptively attached to a shipping container according to claim 14, wherein:

said step of establishing an Ad-Hoc network connection establishes a Bluetooth piconet network.

18. (previously presented) The method of distributing data obtained from sensors adaptively attached to a shipping container according to claim 11, wherein:

said step of transmitting said national security sensor data from said second shipping container transmits to a cell phone communications network.

19. (previously presented) A method of distributing data obtained from sensors adaptively attached to a shipping container comprising:

establishing a network connection between a first shipping container and a second shipping container;

transmitting sensor data from said first shipping container to said second shipping container if said sensor attached to said first shipping container detects a hazard and said first shipping container is unable to transmit its sensor data to at least one of an off ship transmission path and a shipboard system; and

at least one of testing and detecting a container tracking system functionality and anomalies at a safe distance from port facilities by a line of intermediary communications buoys placed at sea at appropriate locations to.

20. (previously presented) Apparatus for distributing data obtained from sensors adaptively attached to a shipping container, comprising:

means for establishing a network connection between a first shipping container, a second shipping container and a ship's bridge;

means for transmitting national security sensor data from said first shipping container to said second shipping container; and

means for transmitting said national security sensor data to said ship's bridge if at least one of said first shipping container and said second shipping container detects a hazard.

21. (previously presented) The apparatus of distributing data obtained from sensors adaptively attached to a shipping container according to claim 20, further comprising:

means for detecting changes in a path of radio signals between said first shipping container and said second shipping container to detect additions and removal of at least one shipping container from a ship.

22. (previously presented) The apparatus of distributing data obtained from sensors adaptively attached to a shipping container according to claim 20, further comprising:

means for transmitting said national security sensor data from said second shipping container to at least one of a satellite data path, a radio data path, and said shipboard system.

23. (original) The apparatus of distributing data obtained from sensors adaptively attached to a shipping container according to claim 20, wherein:

said means for establishing a network is adapted to establish an Ad-Hoc network.

24. (original) The apparatus of distributing data obtained from sensors adaptively attached to a shipping container according to claim 20, wherein:

said means for establishing a network connection is adapted to establish a hard-wired Ad-Hoc network.

25. (original) The apparatus of distributing data obtained from sensors adaptively attached to a shipping container according to claim 20, wherein:

said means for establishing a network connection is adapted to establish a wireless Ad-Hoc network.

26. (original) The apparatus of distributing data obtained from sensors adaptively attached to a shipping container according to claim 23, wherein:

said means for establishing an Ad-Hoc network connection is adapted to establish a Bluetooth piconet network.

27. (previously presented) The apparatus of distributing data obtained from sensors adaptively attached to a shipping container according to claim 20, wherein:

said means for transmitting said national security sensor data from said second shipping container is adapted to transmit to a cell phone communications network.

28. (currently amended) A shipping container tracking system, comprising:  
at least one shipping container sensor adapted to be attached to a first shipping container to sense at least one of a condition of said first shipping container and a condition of at least one item within said first shipping container;

a ~~shipping container~~ communication adapter associated with said first shipping container to adaptively communicate with a communication adapter associated with at least one other second shipping container; at least one of said communication adapters defining a master device and another of said communication adapters defining a slave device;

a satellite communication adapter;

a radio adapter;

wherein said shipping container tracking system transmits sensor data using one of said satellite communication adapter and said radio adapter, and if said transmission of said sensor data fails using one of said satellite communication adapter and said radio adapter, said shipping container tracking system transmits sensor data using the other of said satellite communication adapter and said radio adapter.

29. (original) The shipping container tracking system according to claim 28, wherein:

said radio adapter is adapted to transmit to a cell phone communications network.

30. (currently amended) The shipping container tracking system according to claim 28, wherein:

each said ~~shipping container~~ communication adapter is at least one of a a Bluetooth communication adapter, a Wi-Fi communications adapter, and a Ultra-Wide-Band communications adapter.

31. (original) The shipping container tracking system according to claim 28, wherein:

said satellite communication adapter and said radio adapter are attached to a ship's bridge.

32. (previously presented) A shipping container for use in a shipping container tracking system, comprising:

a shipping container housing;

a satellite transmitter on a top of said shipping container housing;

a radio transmitter on a side of said shipping container housing, said radio transmitter to communicate with a second shipping container; and

a Global Positioning System (GPS) satellite receiver on said top of said shipping container housing.

33. (previously presented) The shipping container tracking system according to claim 1, further comprising:

a sensor to sense a condition of at least one item within said first shipping container.